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Identity of Russians living in Norwegian-Russian borderland

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Introduction

Norwegian-Russian borderland is the unique land. The formal border existed here only in XIX century. Some parts of this territory changed its status during its history several times. For example, between World Wars the part of the land here was Finnish territory. Most of Norwegians heard about bad ecology in Russia from early childhood. Many years Norwegians, living in the country which is a NATO member, believed that Russians war forces could come at any time. But nothing in this world is always stable.

The political situation in the northern part of Europe changed and continues changing even now. Last 20 years changed a lot in relations between Russia and Norway. There is no so big amount of distrust here anymore and cross-border contacts in different spheres continue its growing despite of propaganda. The establishment of Barents Euro-Arctic Region was a great and very brave initiative. People from Russian and Norwegian territories take part in it. During years of cooperation there were a lot of cross-border projects in economics, culture, environment and even security.

It goes without saying that relations across the borders became more “normal”. A big role in this process played not only political links but people-to-people contacts. The friendship relations were developed here. The whole generation grew in this atmosphere. For this generation crossing the border between Russia and Norway is normal. People come to the other country not only for shopping but due to the needs of education, research, sport and so on. People-to-people contacts built some kind of the bridge between our countries. And this bridge still functions despite of that fact that Norway has imposed sanctions on Russia. May be it will not be easy to save this bridge on the top of Europe but people believe that our countries will be wise enough to do it.

My own experience shows that we really have something in common. That’s why the question of the identity of people living here and existence of the Barents identity is very important for me. The Barents Region started its life from the name. Real contacts existed. Real people are meeting. Is it still only the name or something real? Cooperation here developed because many people wanted it and there was real need of it. Can the Barents Region become the model for the rest of the world? If everything that was done was only artificial, then Barents cooperation soon will be just a part of our history.

First of all I will say about the starting point of writing this paper – my fieldwork. My Norwegian partner Lina Winge and I started to work on the joint project. It was my first experience of this kind of collaboration. We wanted to understand how people living on the edge of the border between two states (Norway and Russia) have experienced changes in politics, how it influenced on their relations to the neighbouring country and their daily life.

Preliminary we wanted to limit ourselves and choose only two people from each country to be able to finish our project in time. We decided to interview two people from different sides of the border, from the generation which remember the World War II, who has lived in the border zone for a long time and remember different periods of the history and has lived through all of them. So we wanted to understand the evolution and changes in social structure and how they influenced on these persons. Now only few people can tell us about what life was like in those days. We decided that we must take this chance. It is really unique opportunity. Such a possibility may not be in the nearest future.

We chose two ladies. One – from Nikel and one – from small village near Kirkenes situated very close to the Russian-Norwegian border – Elvenes. Russian woman Lera is living in Russian border town Nikel. Then we met Russian lady it turned out that she had spent most of her life in small village Rajakoski near the border between Russia and Norway. Norwegian Emmy is living in small village near Kirkenes with her elder sister. So we had two very similar cases. The only difference was that one woman had lived in Russia, and the other – in Norway. They lived all their lives close to the border and to each other. But were their lives as similar as geographical position of the places where they lived? It was extremely interesting for us – what effect has it had on individuals to live an entire life in a geographical area that has changed identity several times? During work on this project I realized that the thing that interested me most of all is changing of people's identity in Norwegian-Russian borderland if, of course, it had place.

Russia and Norway were divided by a hard political border for the most of the 20th century. The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the creation of Barents Euro-Arctic region led the way to a re-negotiation of the border. The number of border crossing increased and economic exchange and people-to-people contacts began. The destruction of the Iron Curtain (when the Soviet Union collapsed) was the official stamp of opening the borders. We asked ourselves whether the situation has changed here in the Far North. We knew that there was cooperation here, near Russian-Norwegian border, earlier. We wanted to know if it increased over time.

We decided to give women chance to tell their stories to us. We wanted them to tell us about their feelings and memories from different periods of their life. We decided to focus on how their way of life changed. We wanted to know also how identity of people changes through the time in this area. Technically the interviews was filmed and photographed. We even filmed one of interviews with Lera in Rajakoski almost on Russian-Norwegian border.

In the beginning the author planned that this paper will be based on the memoirs of only two people living in the Barents region now. Each story is phenomenal and extremely interesting. During work on this project the author realized that it is impossible to write the Master's dissertation based only on two interviews. Moreover the author of this paper doesn't speak Norwegian and doesn't really understand that Norwegian lady said. It seems that it will be very interesting to compare views of old people and young generation in some way. Unfortunately the author had no chance to ask people from Norway (Kirkenes). It was difficult to find Norwegian to ask them questions which are important for this research (the author found only four people to interview). So on that stage the author decided to write this paper based on the interview of Lera and some interviews of Russian people from Murmansk and Nikel. The author started to interview some people of different age in Murmansk and Nikel asking same questions as Lera and Emmy were asked. So the author decided to use information that he really can use. It seemed to him that interviewing will help to make more realistic view on the question "How people from Russian borderland see each other and themselves?" And it in its turn will help to make the question of borderland identity more clear.

So the author decided to concentrate on the identity of borderland Russians. There was no enough information from Norwegian side. To say true there were only several interviews. Interviewing other people (not only Lera) helped a lot. The author had a lot of information and could make some conclusions based on many interviews.

In author's mind people from Murmansk are not borderland citizens in the full sense. But the border influences on them too. By interviewing people from Nikel and Murmansk the author of this paper was manage to see the difference in views on cooperation process and differences of identities of people living on the border and those who live in other parts of the Barents Region (the city of Murmansk). It should be noted that Geir Honneland in his book "Borderland Russians" too widely understood the concept of border resident. The population of Murmansk can not be named borderland citizens in the full sense of these words. The research shows that people from Murmansk and Nikel have completely different views on various issues and their outlook varies considerably. To call people from Murmansk border residents is the same as to

call inhabitants of St. Petersburg border residents. This is not quite justified because the border is rather far and had no significant effect on people. But some scientists call territories like the port of Murmansk the borderland of the second level.

In the beginning I thought that it is very important to choose right persons for interviewing. But later I realized that it will be better just make questionnaire and asked as many people as possible to answer my questions. I asked people with different life experience, of different age, different gender and different social status. Some of them have never been in Norway. Others had big experience of contacts with Norwegians. Few of them has work dealing with cooperation in Barents Region. My partner and I made the interview with Tatiana Bazanova who is the part of cooperation process in the Barents Region. It was filmed as interviews with Lera and Emmy.

Interviewing of people and filming them was not the same thing as to give them questionnaire and give the time to answer questions. Each of these two ways of getting information has positive features. Then you just ask questions and film people have no time to prepare “correct” answers. They just say that they think. Personal interviews give the chance to understand people better, to realize that they really mean saying something. And you always have the opportunity to ask extra questions, of course. On the contrary when you give people questions and they have time to think on them they can give you more complete answers.

I must say that work on joint project and discussing it with my partner influenced on me very much. The truth is always born in discussing and my partner helped me a lot. But there is the moral problem – during discussing joint project we exchange views and it is very difficult sometimes to understand those thoughts are my own after it. Ideas were in the air. Speaking about problems during working on this project I must say that it was rather difficult for me to interview Russian lady. For example, she has a hearing problem. But she never asked to repeat question and just start speaking about things she want. The serious problem was that Lera was not critical at all. It was rather difficult to understand if she really thinks so or just want to speak only pleasant things about Norwegians and other things. May be she would be more open if there were no foreigner near her (my Norwegian partner). It was very important to see real people’s attitude to the persons living on the other side of the border to understand the question of borderland identity. Can it influence on the process of changing the identity? – I asked myself.

Before the first interview I thought that it was impossible to communicate with foreigners in times of the Iron Curtain. I thought that propaganda did its job and people from different sides

of the border were enemies to each other. But it turned out that things were very different. Norwegians helped to build school and water-power plant in Russia for example.

There was one ethical problem. It was rather difficult for me to speak about the war period. Lera started speaking about it first of all without waiting for my questions. She was upset and almost cried. It was not easy even to listen about those terrible times. Tatyana's interview was different from interviews with Lera. She was real treasure chest for us because of her great experience of taking part in cross-border cooperation.

So it was long road to start writing. Now I realize that it was not perfect way of writing the paper, but I tried to do my best. This paper is about identity of people from Russian borderland. The first chapter is about the meaning of the concept "identity" and its kinds. The second part is about identity of people from Russian part of the Barents Region (Murmansk region). The author also writes about interviews with Norwegians in this chapter. Comparing views of Russians and Norwegians helps to understand the matter of borderland identity better. The third is devoted to the culture and identity and their mutual influence. This part is about the concept of dialogue of cultures also.

The paper also reveals the following questions:

- How geographical position influence on identity of people?
- How neighbouring countries influence on the culture of borderland of other country?

The oral history is the main method in this work. A lot of interviews helped to understand the identity question better. A lot of people took part in the sociological research. There were residents of Murmansk region, Nikel, Norway and Leningrad region among them.

1.0 The meaning of identity

When I started writing about identity I had a vague notion of what is it. This conception was unclear and incomprehensible for me. It seems to be not natural construction having slight relation to the reality. It merged with such notions as national character and mentality in my mind. It was very important to see the difference between such concepts as mentality, national character and identity first of all.

Here I will try to separate these concepts and give some definitions. The mentality is the temper, spiritual inclinations, the direction of the mind. National character is the summation of spiritual qualities peculiar to a particular nation. In my mind identity is the identification of the self with a certain environment, awareness of self in the world. The question of identity is discussed in all social sciences.

The problem of identification existed when man wanted to understand who he is and what the difference between him and other people is. The need for identity is specific human characteristic. Identification had different components which depends on gender, racial, ethnic, religious, social, class, political, ideological and other differences. The problem of identification arose at the same time when self-awareness of a man, the need to understand who he is and what is the difference between him and other people appeared. Identity is the identification of the self with a certain environment, awareness of itself in the world. It is the consciousness of the existence and characteristics of own personality.

The problem of identity is closely related to such concepts as the mentality and character. The mentality is the disposition, spiritual inclinations, the direction of the mind. Character is the complex of spiritual qualities which are inherent to the particular community or group. The historian Georges Duby wrote that the mentality is a system of images, which is the basis of human ideas about the world and their place in this world and, therefore, defines the actions and behavior of people.

We can say that there are two levels of identity — personal-psychological and socio-psychological. The first one can be define as awareness of the man himself (self-identification). The second one is the awareness of involvement in a particular social group. The ethnic identity is the form of socio-psychological identity. This kind of identity is given by birth in the certain ethnic environment.

During the pre-modern period, which lasted until early twentieth century, the identities of individuals were prescribed by place of birth and the social position of one's parents. Identities were understood to be a matter of human nature, predestination, and fate (Bauman 2001). The concept of identity changed during the time. Globalization processes have led to major changes in the nature of identity. Nowadays construction of identity is understood as an individual project.

The man can have a lot of identities at the same time: ethnic, social, professional, gender, civil, religious, racial, political, cultural, regional and many others. The most common examples of group identities connected to particular places are national, ethnic and regional identities. Moreover, the formation, operation and development of each identity and the relationship between them, depends on the situation. The identification is multicomponent. It is related to differences in gender, age, race, profession, social class, ethnic and religious group, ideological and political beliefs. Some scientists say that each man has multiple identity, others that there are a lot of identities in each person. Whatever it was one fact is obvious – person can choose only from identities which are available for his observations.

The identification means that the man or the community of people aware his real place in the natural and social world. The identification is the demarcation between “Self” and “Other”. The identification is the definition of the circle of persons with whom the individual is connected and consciously identifies himself, and the circle of persons to whom he actually opposed. All his life the man is searching for social, national, religious, psychological and gender identity. In this complex of identities one identity can be suppressed, and the other – come to the fore and become the dominant. All these identities can live in one person. They are characteristics of his different sides.

The term “identity” has a long history. Scientists use the term “identity” in different social and humanitarian sciences from the second half of 1970-s. This term was coined by American psychologist Erik Erikson in 1960s. Erikson argued that identity is the foundation of any personality and an indicator of its psychosocial well-being. According to Erikson identity can be described as:

- inner sameness of the subject in the perception of the surrounding world, the sense of time and space, in other words, it is the feeling and perception of itself as a unique stand-alone identity;

- the sameness of personal and socially accepted worldview - personal identity and spiritual well-being;
- the feeling of the belonging to the some community (group identity).

Erikson wrote that identity is forming in the form of successive psychosocial crises: crisis of adolescence, a farewell to the “illusions of youth”, midlife crisis, disappointment in other people or in the profession or in itself.

Today the concept of identity is widely used in social and cultural studies. In the most general sense, it means recognizing the belonging to a socio-cultural group by the person. It allows him to determine his place in the socio-cultural environment and to make navigation in the outside world easier. People need the identity because they need to make life more organized and well-disposed. It is possible in the community of other people. We should adopt the dominant elements of consciousness, tastes, habits, norms, values, and other means of interconnection of this community. Each person is a part of different social and cultural communities in the same time. We can pick out different kinds of identity: professional, civil, ethnic, political, religious, cultural and so on.

Cultural identity can be described as the feeling of the belonging to the some culture or cultural group. This feeling forms the value relation of man to himself, other people, society and the world as a whole. The essence of cultural identity contains the individual conscious acceptance of the cultural norms and behavior patterns, values and language, in the sense of the self from the standpoint of the cultural characteristics that are accepted in this society, in self-identification with the cultural patterns of this particular society. Cultural identity means that individual forms constant qualities that make some cultural events and phenomena causing sympathy or antipathy. The person chooses the type, manner and form of communication on the basis of cultural identity. Cultural identification comes to the fore whenever there was a “meeting” of different cultures, whether as a result of geographical proximity, trade relations or military expansion. Castells wrote that cultural factors dominate in modern society (Castells 2004: 6).

According to the Cultural Studies each person is the part of the culture in which he grew up and matured as a person. People don't pay attention to their cultural identity in everyday life. Particular qualities of native culture become visible when individual meets with representatives of another culture. Individual realizes that there are other forms of experiences, behaviors, ways of thinking that are significantly different from the usual and well-known. The individual

identity continues its development during comparing and contrasting positions of different cultures. The separation of people of native and other cultures is the basis of cultural identity. We often say “us” and “them” when realize that there are other systems of values and norms of behavior. The concept of “stranger” appears in these circumstances. It means that people from other cultures are strange, unusual, unknown and so on. They can be even evil in our eyes. The “stranger” is outside the usual and well-known phenomenon or representations. We can understand that is really our “own” only by comparison with “strange”. We can hardly understand our cultural identity without such comparisons. We can say so about other kinds of identity too.

There are natural and artificial identities. The first kind is something that we can hardly change. Racial and ethnic identities are the examples of natural identity. The society is something outside the framework of natural identity. Members of society have a lot of identities. Each member of society has his own hierarchy of identities. The man can even have several religious identities. National identity is artificial identity. There are no ethnic or racial states.

The identity is not something just given by the nationality. Identity is the awareness of the existence and characteristics of the “Self”. Identity is a process at the same time. The construction of identity never ends. It is transforming during the time. “Identities are “emergent and constructed (rather than fixed and natural), contested and polymorphic (rather than unitary and singular), and interactive and process-like (rather than static and essence-like)” (Hønneland 2010: 6).

There are a lot of kinds of identities. Cultural identity is the group identity. This means that those qualities with the help of which the man identifies himself relates not only to the personality but to the belonging to a particular cultural group. Culture always was one of the ways of being human in the world. That’s why cultural identity often plays a leading role. Even state policy and forming different international blocks (like BEAR) is based on cultural affinity. Ethnic identity as one of the kinds of cultural identity is very important for many people too.

Identity is the self-determination of social subject. This term was invented by Sigmund Freud in 1921. This scientist wrote that identity is the process. During this process of identification the comparison of one object to another exists on the basis of a single characteristic or property or set of properties.

Acceptance of the “Other” and renouncement of nationalism and chauvinism is very important for dialogue of cultures. The effectiveness of the dialogue of cultures depends on the

objective ability of various cultures to the real “cooperation”. It also depends on the ability to borrow, adapt another’s and to share own.

As it was mentioned above the concept of identity was developed by Erickson. This scientist wrote about two aspects of identity: “I — identity” (natural and individual) and social identity (involvement of the individual in social processes). Identity forms by confrontation between these components. Negative identity builds on the base of the scheme “I/we are not like he/them” and contains rejection or denial of one or other object, or a total contrast between “us” and “them”.

Bakhtin wrote that the identity exists in this point of mismatch. The real “I” is generated in this point. He also argued that the choice between morality and the requirements of their own motives makes us tolerant. A person must be focused on the movement to tolerance and self-improvement, self-knowledge and introspection touching another being. The importance of ethnic identity, a sense of unity with people of the same nationality increases often on the border.

Territorial identity is one of the fundamental characteristics of collective identity. There are two main characteristics of territorial identity – ethnic and political (national). National identity is only one floor of territorial identity. Regional and local identity are often more important for a person. There are several floors in ethnic identity also. There are ethnic, super-ethnic and sub-ethnic identities. Civilizational identity is one of the kinds of political and super-ethnic identity.

Ethnic identity is the most available form of social identity in Russia. Social identification and social differentiation build on the basis of process of categorization of “we” and “them”. Sometimes the opposition can unite. Ethnic identity helps people to define their place in a multiethnic society and to learn how to behave inside and outside of their group.

Language, native land and nature lie at the heart of national identity. Territorial (local and regional) identity occupies a great place in the national identification. Culture and historic past also occupies a great place in the structure of national identification as well as character traits, religion, appearance. A lot of respondents said that local population has special, unique features (behavior, character, habits and others). Residents of Murmansk region mostly give priority to local identity. So local and regional identities stand in the hierarchy of identities above the national identity and civilizational (supranational) identity. But some respondents give higher position to ethnic identity than local.

Here, in the North, where most people do not feel any tension in international relations, regional identity still has priority for local residents. It is more important than national identity for the biggest part of respondents. Some Norwegians feel that they have something common with the residents of Murmansk region. Some of them even say that they are different from people living in South Norway. Even people who come to Murmansk region from other parts of Russia mention that regional identity is very important. Respondents mentioned that people from Murmansk region has particular qualities of behaviors and culture.

The author asked people of Murmansk region the question “Who are Russians?” They answer that to be Russian is to be patriot, to love Russia. People often give priority to the local identity in ordinary life.

As it was mentioned above there are two levels of identity – personal and group. Mass media can play great role in forming attitude to foreigners and in forming identity of people. People living in Central Russia far from the border give more negative definitions to the foreigners. They rare meet them in ordinary life. It seems to them that they are too different and very strange. It is very useful to know more about other nations. It helps to understand our own culture better. It also helps to realize that everything that is different from our traditions and customs is not funny and unreasonable like think those who have never been abroad. But the man who spent a lot of time in traveling can become a stranger in his own country.

Frank said that understanding of own identity and understanding of oneself means that person understand his past, his roots, his existence and his development, his connection with the past, with his predecessors and ancestors.

I should say that as G. Hønneland I am mainly preoccupied with “ordinary people’s cultural identities and how they are constructed and confirmed through every-day conversations and narratives” (Hønneland 2010: 6). It is also interesting for me if people feel a spirit of community with their neighbours. I want to show how the proximity to the border influences on them.

“Concept of narrative identities says that there are reasons to believe that there are strong identities based on both public narratives relating to local history and nature and metanarratives about globalization and cross-border communities” (Viken 2008: 23).

Margaret R. Somers claims that it is through narrativity that we come to know, understand, and make sense of the social world, and it is through narratives and narrativity that we constitute

our social identities. In her mind narratives – that is, the stories people tell – are not just reflections about the world, but rather constitutive of the “Self”. They not only give expression to the outside world about which people are, but they also contribute to making people who they are. So identity is our self-identification in this world. Somers names four kinds of narrative: ontological, public, conceptual and meta-narratives. “First, ontological narratives refer to people’s personal experiences. Second, public narratives are shared, for example within a local community or particular place. Third, people have professional, knowledge or work-related identities that are based on conceptual narratives. Finally, some identities are based on metanarratives in the sense of, for example, grand theories or ideologies. All these narratives are continuously constructed and therefore also contestable, and by definition unstable” (Viken 2008: 24). This paper will be based on ontological narratives (stories that individuals use to make sense of their lives). The author used the qualitative research tradition. This paper is based on interviews of people whose opinions of northerners are based on their own observations. It examines regional and cultural identity in the context of dialogue of cultures.

2.0. Identity of people from Russian part of the Barents Region (Murmansk region)

The establishment of the Barents Cooperation was very important from the point of view of security approach first of all. Regional political cooperation and cross-border human contacts helped to change the situation in this region for the better. But did it help to form the common regional identity?

Researcher Geir Hønneland believes that the extensive human contacts across the borders already have resulted in the emergence of a “Barents generation” in the areas which are close to the border. Really in today’s Russia the power of internationalization is growing. There is movement not only of people and goods but of information and ideas also. Identity is changing, transforming and deforms in borderzone. Is it good or bad? I must stress that the other’s identity can not be the basis of one’s own identity. But in my mind you can open your own in the process of cognition of the other. It helps to break stereotypes. But other stereotypes can come on their place.

We can distinguish two levels of identity. First one may be called personal psychological which is the awareness of the man himself. It is self-identity. The second is social psychological, awareness of the involvement in a particular social group. Ethnic identity is a variation of the second level. This kind of identity is acquired by birth in a particular ethnic environment.

Today you can hear about the Barents identity. It seems to be something like a kind of the common identity in Barents Region including Norwegian-Russian borderland. Is cross-border identity possible? Some researchers say that the state is no more the main actor on the market of identity. So German philosopher Ulrich Beck says that “cosmopolitan state” can be one of the answers to the challenges of globalization. This state must be based on indifference of existence of national identities according to the constitutional principle of tolerance. This kind of state is impossible without formation of a certain way of thinking, supranational identity, culture and institutions. To be cosmopolitan in this case means simultaneously recognize both equality and differences and feel committed to the benefit of all mankind. “There is no national way out of the trap of globalization. But there is, perhaps, transnational way” - says Ulrich Beck (Beck 2000).

Globalization is the objective process. It can not be canceled. It is determined by the level of technology achieved by mankind, economic and cultural development. Globalization influences on all spheres of society’s life. But it has specific features in different spheres. The interaction of cultures, elimination of borders for the exchange of cultural values does not lead to the assertion of a single culture. Features of different cultures are preserved.

Globalization influences on all people of our planet in one way or another. The boundaries of national cultures are blurred. The dialogue of cultures plays important role in these circumstances. Can it be the strategy for further development of human civilization in the context of globalization? The experience of comprehension of different culture is very important. Nowadays the borders of national culture can be quite difficult to determine.

The distinctive, individual features help nations to understand themselves better, to build their own path of development, to improve relations with its neighbours and the peoples of other countries. Globalization is characterized by increasing the depth and strength of mutual penetration of cultural, political and economic ties in different countries, the development and interplay of cultural, commercial, financial, industrial and other relations between states.

By David Émile Durkheim the identity is the product of the free choice. The identity is based on people's belonging to a particular community and is build from three perspectives such as the Past, the Present and the Future.

I think that according to the situation on the border between Norway and Russia now this view seems utopian. Even if globalization someday lead to great change of identity (national, social, cultural) it will be not so soon. The analysis of interviews can help us to answer a question is there any trans-border identity on Norwegian-Russian border.

I will try to show how people look at themselves and their place. My task is also to investigate if the proximity to the border influence on people living near the border and how they create and negotiate identities within the context. In addition to the interviews I will use some articles and books on history, sociology and philosophy.

It is very interesting task to investigate how political and social transformations changed local identity. Due to the concept of narrative identities there are strong identities based on both public narratives relating to local history and nature and metanarratives about globalization and cross-border communities. My investigations are based on interviews and questioning of more than 30 people living in Murmansk and Nikel. I have no opportunities to ask a lot of people from Kirkenes too. So, as I said earlier, I decided to base my paper mostly on interviews of people from Russian side of the border. I tried to understand how people living in this part of Barents Region look at themselves and their community and place. The paper is about how Russians see Norwegians too. Really the question of the view of the neighbour (foreigner) is very important if you want to understand the identity of borderland Russians. The border zone is the place of real contacts not political declarations only. I should say that the image of Norwegians always was

positive in Russia. Even in Soviet time Norwegian national character in Russian newspapers and books had a positive connotation. Borders are the territory of communication and disunity at the same time. Now the Russian-Norwegian border is the area of intensive communication and original creative workshop.

The BEAR is the complex formation. The Nordic regions and the Russian territories differ in the following:

- language and culture;
- legal, political and economic traditions;
- standards of living and so on.

Norwegians grew up in the different kind of a state with democratic traditions, individual liberty and market relations. They grew up in the different world. The situation in the Soviet Union and in the Russian Federation was quite different. Unfortunately there are people on both sides of the border who think that increasing cooperation is a danger to public order and social values even now.

Russians and Norwegians have different mentality and national character. But we do not look much different from each other. We are interested in the same movies. We read same books. We feel the closeness and similarity, but the cultural differences between us are great. I can see it in Murmansk, and in Kirkenes too. They are bigger than we can imagine. This difference between Russians and Norwegians may not be visible at the first sight. Really it is not as visible, as the unlikeness of many other nations. Even nations which have common border may be very dissimilar and you can see this unlikeness perfectly especially in the border zone. We have a lot in common due to the influence of similar climate, nature and so on. But sometimes it is very difficult to understand each other.

There is an article by Dmitry Ermolaev. The name of it is “Politically incorrect notes”. The author points out that Russians and Norwegians are neighbours, but not brothers. He wrote that politicians speak a lot about the success of cooperation, about building bridges and about forming the new reality. There are many successful projects, but there are a lot of problems too. He says that the most painful of them are not in the field of high politics and economics, but in the relationship of ordinary people (Ermolaev 2013: 16). I must say that there is a truth in his words. But if you look at the person as if he is an enemy, he will never become your real friend.

At the moment Norway and Russia are main participants in the Barents cooperation. For centuries these countries lived in the atmosphere of mutual suspicion and mistrust. Prejudices and stereotypes can't disappear at once. Ermolaev writes that they already become the part of national consciousness. He says that the state remains the state until it can save its identity. Norwegian identity based on the statement that Norway is the outpost of European civilization in the North and there is a "Russian bear" near it. At the same time a big part of Russians thinks that they must keep clear of Norwegians to save their traditional values.

Ermolaev says that the main achievement of our cooperation is that it doesn't stop in spite of different national characters. Prejudices became the part of our collective unconscious. They are far from reality, but nevertheless influence on our contacts. I agree with author. It is hardly possible to change your views at once. We may take part in joint events and spend a lot of time together, but there is something strange in our subconscious which is ready to come to the surface.

Ermolaev told an interesting story about him and his good Norwegian friend. One evening they were sitting together in the living room and watching TV. They were watching the film "The Lord of the Rings". There is an interesting episode in this film — hordes of orcs which are the embodiment of evil storm a besieged fortress. Dmitry and his friend almost simultaneously said different things. "NATO" — said Dmitry. "The Red Army" — said his Norwegian friend. We may speak a lot about "borderless world" and even feel ourselves "citizens of the world", but prejudices and stereotypes will not allowed this concept to become the reality at once.

Geir Hønneland, Research Director at Fridtjof Nansen Institute and University of Tromsø, a well-known Norwegian researcher specializing in international relations in the European North, in his book "Borderland Russians" portrays the Russian Northerner as well-educated, cultured, restrained and introvert. His views are not far from reality. Hønneland writes: "I did not discover a large amount of suspicion towards the Nordic countries among my interviewees, but there was substantial derision and contempt. Such sentiments resonate with age-old Russian perceptions of the West, but in my interviewees I got the impression that they were found not too far under the surface — ready to be activated when someone demands an opinion of Scandinavians from you, but possibly also ready to be modified in encounters with alternative narrative practices" (Hønneland 2010).

It is not easy to understand people by interviewing them. Most of them don't like to be objects of study. Sometimes it can cause derision and contempt. We prepared questions and

asked two our ladies. But the main task was to make them telling their stories, real histories of their life. We were trying to understand how changes in relations between Russia and Norway influenced on their daily life. We made two interviews with Lera and two with Emmy using video camera, audio recorder and notes. We also use newspaper articles about these women in our work on this project. We translated them in English, so both of us can easily use them.

We have a lot of material: more than 6 hours of video, audio records and some articles to analyze them. Talking about problems I must note that it is not easy to make interview then you don't know language. Some interviews were made in Russian and others in Norwegian. After that we were transcribing and translating video in English. There is one other problem then you make interview. People not always want to answer your questions. Sometimes they want to say something different or don't want to give true answers. It is not easy to ask about difficult periods of life also. Sometimes people start crying and so on. But nevertheless I think that we have answers on all our questions now.

With the help of interviews I found answers on some questions which are very interesting for my research. Here are some questions I asked myself starting to work on this paper. What can unite people living in prosperous Norway and those who live in small industrial town on other side of the border and in Russian city Murmansk? Can they have some kind of common identity calling "Barents identity"? Which values can unite border residents? How people, their world outlook, their relation to each other changed over time?

Nowadays some people (Russian and Norwegian) living in the borderland feel that their "own" territory is not limited by the state border. "They are neither Russian, nor Norwegian in the full meaning of these words. Local identity has changed and their life is like walking in two worlds. Furthermore, political and cultural elites of the region are actively constructing the concept of the Euro-Arctic Barents Region as an identity region" (Rogova 2009: 31-42). The individual today can designs his own identity from many different identities. A lot of people feel themselves as cosmopolitans, "global citizens". They are at home in any country. The self-identification often based on multiple identities. There is a traditional view in Russia that it is not good to be the cosmopolitan. Cosmopolitan rejects national culture and national traditions, motherland and patriotism. There is no difference where to live, if only he feels himself comfortable and cozy. But now there is also another view. The cosmopolitanism is the extension of the idea of the motherland to the whole world. The devotion to the universal human values does not preclude the patriotism. This view seems to be more correct in modern times. There is no need to bring the interests of the nation or the state as a sacrifice for the common good of

humanity. The common interests of the whole mankind should be more important than anything else. With the formation of a single historical space, when the fruits of cultural activity became the property of all nations and peoples, unity in the cultural realm became more confirmed. Literature, art, philosophy, morality have crossed national boundaries and gained the world citizenship.

On the other hand the culture of borderlands is often viewed as a marginal space for a sort of cultural hybrids, which have adopted some “foreign” cultural traits. Russia has type of culture different from Western countries. It combines European individualistic and Asian community basics. Western values can’t be just borrowed. They can be adapted for alien cultural environment. Until now, there is a perception that the mutual permeability of Russian and Western cultures is no more than an illusion. Really, the difference between Russia and Europe is very big. You have to look closely to see common features. From a bird’s eye it is obvious that on the different sides of the “Russia-Europe” boundaries people read different books, were passionate about different philosophical ideas, built houses in different styles and so on. But if you will look closely, you see that on both sides of the border people read the same books, were passionate about the same philosophical ideas, built houses in the same styles and so on, but there was the time difference. Now there isn’t practically any time difference due to the influence of the mass media. It goes without saying that cultural cooperation stimulates enrichment of different cultures but it is very difficult to make it mutual.

Ordinary people (a most of them) don’t have a lot of information about Norwegians and forms their views on the neighbour nation on that they see in their own country. I think that a lot of Norwegians do so too. Sometimes it leads to the negative conclusions. But we can not find answers on all questions just on that we see near us in our own country.

I do not have a big experience of living in Norway to make my own subjective conclusions about Norwegian mentality, but I saw Norwegians in Murmansk and can say that they are different from us. It is hard to be objective. We can’t treat people like machines. Human nature is not classifiable, but we can highlight some national features, although. Now I can say that I saw many Norwegians in my life. After years of my working I was impressed in this nation. They are creative and open-minded. They are great patriots. It is always a pleasure to communicate with such kind of person. I remember my first meeting with Norwegian librarians. I was very shy and worried about my English. But my colleagues soon make me feel it easy. I made out that they are very open, cheerful and sometimes a little bit naïve. It looked like they are enjoying every

moment of life. I understood that nationality practically doesn't matter in person-to-person communication.

Social and cultural ties, shared values, religion, traditions, art and many other factors play an important role in the rapprochement of territories of different states. Social and cultural space is the most important characteristic of the regional society. For example, during the Nordic Days in Murmansk and the Barents Spectacle in Kirkenes we can see examples of each other cultural activity. Russian Days in Kirkenes help Norwegians to understand Russians better.

Consulate General of the Kingdom of Norway in Murmansk does much to make the Norwegian culture more visible in the Murmansk region. Unfortunately, I can't say that same steps are taking in order to familiarize the Norwegians with Russian culture. But it is very important too. It is a pity that so small attention is paid to the sphere of culture in Russia now.

The question that concerns me most of all is – Is it real to build the bridge over traditional cultural differences with the help of the cross-border cooperation or only economical projects are really useful? Unfortunately, people more often think about things which separate them, than about what they have in common. Often the mutual hatred exists. It frequently comes to the extreme expression, as if the meaning of life is to kill. Martin Luther King said that men hate each other because they fear each other, and they fear each other because they don't know each other, and they don't know each other because they are often separated from each other. Sometimes it is very difficult to find common features in "others", but likely there are examples which give hope that cooperation between our regions will be even more fruitful and visible.

The national identity is the product of not only political development. It is the consequence of cultural development too. National identity isn't unchanging. It is in a constant state of development. Some other aspects of an individual's identity can outweigh those which are related to the nationality. The globalization plays an important role here. On the other hand national roots can be strengthened because the globalization sometimes creates an impression that there is a danger for national identity. Minorities such as, for example, Vietnamese and Sami in Norway, influence on the national identity.

Cultural globalization means the clash of localities. But local cultures don't disappear. They acquire new - global - measurement. Such an understanding can be found in Robertson's and Ulrich Beck's papers. Globalization keeps national culture to the extent that it becomes a blessing or a value for the people of another culture. Tourism and migration play a great role in process of globalization.

Cultural globalization leads to a weakening as well as to a strengthening of national feelings of identity. Cultures meet each other even inland. Children are growing up in the situation, than different cultures mixes in their own country. We may have more common with a foreigner than with a neighbour. Each generation creates its own identity, which combines traditions and new trends. One of Programs of Barents cultural cooperation was called “New winds in the Barents region”. It wasn’t accidentally. Norwegian and Finnmark Days in Murmansk demonstrates how exciting and unusual Norwegian modern culture is and of course it influence on the people of the Murmansk region.

Perhaps a world in which our children will live will not be as colorful as today. Perhaps many of the customs, ceremonies, rituals, etc., which gave the world the diversity will disappear. The big part of the people will learn new forms of the life which will be more relevant to the realities of the time. These phenomenons are caused not only by globalization and internationalization but by modernization also. The globalization and the internationalization are results rather than causes. The modernization changes traditional forms of behavior and cultural forms. National cultures processed all new, bringing originality without losing identity. There is practically no cultures remained unchanged for a long time. There is no need to prevent the modernization. Besides, it’s pointless. If the culture does not develop it degrades. Of course, not every cultural influence is for good. But borrowings are transformed in accordance with national traditions and values. We read the works of foreign philosophers and therefore do not become less Russian. I am great fan of Norwegian literature and it helps me to understand Norwegians better. It helps me to expand the frames of my consciousness. That is inconsistent with our values dissolves. It is impossible to preserve national identity with the help of artificial restrictions.

It is almost impossible to make more or less objective conclusions based on several articles and interviews with some people. So as I mentioned earlier I decided to ask more people. The questions were same. It seemed to me that it will make my work more scientific. I didn’t realize how interesting will be results. They were unexpected and it is not bad. 35 interviews were made. Among my respondents were 6 men and 28 women. The age of interviewees ranges from 19 to the 81. Most of them were from 28 to 57. The half of them speaks English. But most of them can speak English only using vocabulary. Only two respondents speak Norwegian. The biggest part of respondents consists of inhabitants of Murmansk. I tried to find more respondents from Nikel but was able to find only 5 people. Only 6 people moved to the North. 29 respondents were born in Murmansk region. The majority of them have education at university level. There are librarians, students, factory workers, journalists and others among them.

Almost all of them want to move to the other region of Russia. Only one woman wants to move to Norway. Only 7 of my respondents want to stay in Murmansk region. 19 of them were in Norway. 6 of them were in Norway many times. 5 have Norwegians friends. 16 have never been in Norway. 3 of them have never been in Norway and don't want to visit this country. Many interviewees have no personal experience of communicating with Scandinavians. They only have watched them in the streets or heard stories about them.

There is a big difference between interviews of people who deal with Norwegians and those who do not. People who have no Norwegian friends and know Norway badly give negative characteristics to Norwegians more often than those who communicate with Norwegians more often. But in present situation with all scandals with Russian children in Norway and sanctions against Russia even Russians which love Norway and often spend time in this country give negative characteristics to this country and it's citizens.

Here you can see the questionnaire.

- Your age, gender
- The Place of Birth
- What languages do you speak?
- How you imagined North, Murmansk before coming here? Did you get your expectations (if you were born not here)?
- Is the Murmansk different from the cities of Central Russia and it's South? If so, in which way?
- Do you want to move to another region or to another country?
- What does it mean to live near the border between Russia and Norway?
- Does the life here in the North changed over the past decades? If so, how?
- Does your outlook changed during this time?
- What can you say about Norway? Is the neighbouring country different from Russia?
- Have you ever been in Norway? If yes, when was the first time you saw Norway and how many visits to this country you made?
- Does the Norway changed over the past decades?
- What does it mean for you to be Russian? What are Russians? What is Russian national character?
- Can you find a few words to describe the Russian people?

- How can you describe a northerner, a resident of the Murmansk region, a resident of the borderland?
- Are the people who live here in the north different from the inhabitants of the Central Russia, the inhabitants of other regions of Russia?
- What Norwegian's characteristics are different from Russian's? What Russians and Norwegians have in common?
- Does anything changed in the region since the fall of the Iron Curtain, the times of Perestroika?
- Do contacts between Russia and Norway develop now?
- Does international cooperation develop here?
- Do you have Norwegian friends, personal contacts or correspondence with representatives of the neighbouring country?
- Do you feel military tensions on the border between Russia and Norway now?
- Is there a cultural cooperation in the Barents Region? If yes, what is it?
- Would you like to be part of the cooperation in the region?
- Do you remember unpleasant stories related to Norway and Norwegians?

2.1. How we see ourselves? Self-identity.

G. Hønneland named the Kola Peninsular Russia's gateway to Scandinavia. Do people feel a spirit of community with their neighbours on the other side? Does the proximity to the border make them identify less with their own state? This paper will give the portrait of Russians and Russian Northerners based on the complex of interviews. So – how Russians see themselves? What is to be a borderland Russian?

The people of age after 50 sometimes called themselves Soviet people. Nobody mentioned that they belong to such organization as the Union of Independent States. Nobody mentioned BEAR. Europe-wide identity occupies the last position despite the proximity of the region to the international border. At the same time many people mentioned the common identity of the whole mankind.

The kind of identity people mention first of all depends on the age of them. Young people and people elder than 50 give priority to local, ethnic and national identities. Regional, religious and supranational identities are more important for old people. Some young and middle-aged people told about common to all mankind identity.

The features of regional identification were studied by means of series of questions concerning the quality of self-esteem of people living in the Murmansk region. Russians call

themselves open, emotional, generous, unpredictable, hardy, strong, brave, noble. To be Russian is to know Russian history, to remember Russian traditions and to protect the interests of Russia. Russian national character is the mixture of kindness, patriotism, responsiveness, hospitality, credulity. Russians are beautiful, handsome, strong, powerful, kind, friendly, reckless, good-natured, sympathetic, cordial, quick-witted, gambling, very peace-loving, cheerful, hardworking, purposeful, non-possessors. They are able to fend for themselves. They read a lot. Almost all my respondents wrote that they are proud to be Russian. We can say that all these qualities are hypertrophied. Russians are patient to servility. The roots of this quality go back to the Mughal-Tatar yoke, serfdom and the period of totalitarianism.

One woman said that she does not know more tolerant nation than Russian. She said that it cause problems for Russians. They are too open. That's why Russians as nationality are loosing their national roots. They have too wide-open soul.

Other respondent said that Russians are a little bit lazy, non-greedy, unpunctual dreamers. She said: "Russia is my home. All my relatives lived here. Now my children and me live here". To be Russian is to think about meaning of life, to think how everything is bad, dirty and so on. And there is an old Russian tradition to blame everyone and everything in it and to produce dust by yourself.

Russian national character is the mixture of desire for freedom and great deal of patience, sacrifice and ability to exploit. Russian is more nation than ethnos. Our blood is the mixture of blood of different ethnicities. To be Russian is to love this country and to be proud of it's history. The ethnic identity is not so important in Murmansk region because there a lot of representatives of different ethnicities here.

Russian northerners are more generous, more interesting in communication, more friendly, more polite, more positive, more peaceful people, warmer, heartier than other Russians. They are kind, open and always ready to help. Russian Northerners have more active life position. People in Murmansk used to see the sun and the moon in the sky at the same time. They sleep well during Polar day. They have their jackets with them even in summer. They go to spend holidays in other places. Russians living in the North love and try to save Northern nature.

People living in the North of Russia are Russian as one of my respondents said. Northerners are kind, open, patient, slow and clever. Northerners distinguishes provincialism, simplicity, friendliness. They have fewer complexes and are better educated than other Russians. People from Murmansk travel more. Russians living near Norwegian-Russian border are

sociable, hospitable, open for everything new, friendly and mobile. They like traveling and love to make friends. They are peaceable and cultured. They are prone to empathy. The view that the Earth is round and not all foreigners are spies and russophobes is much firmly established in the North of Russia. People living in Murmansk are people with hot hearts and souls.

Not all respondents wrote only pleasant things about Russians. One woman (57 years old) wrote that they are lazy and careless. But at the same time she gave only pleasant characteristics to Northerners (she is one of them). People living in Murmansk are kind, responsive, generous, open and believing everybody and everything. They are patriots of their land. They curse their land but do not leave it. One woman (29 years old) said that Russian Northerners are more polite than other Russians but closed in communication. By the way a lot of people mentioned that residents of Murmansk region are different from other Russians.

I want to write a little bit more about the interview with the youngest girl. She is from Murmansk and she is 19. She doesn't know English. Murmansk is not like towns of middle belt of Russia or southern towns of Russia in her eyes. It has different climate. It became more beautiful during last years. New parks and shops are building. In my mind this girl is looking at the world through pink glasses mostly because of her age. She has never been in Norway but thinks that it is good country which is the friend of Russia. In her mind Russians are strong and never afraid anything. But Russians are as hard as climate in Russia. Northern people don't afraid the cold. They are always ready to help. People are different everywhere. In her mind cooperation in Barents Region develops. She does not know Norwegians. By the way she was so tired of my questions that wrote in the end of questionnaire "I am tired. I want to go home".

Murmansk is the capital of Arctic. The climate is severe but people are softer. People live closer to Europe here. Russian North is the part of Russia so it changes when Russia changes. Murmansk is a beautiful city. Murmansk has specific landscape and weather. There is a lot of snow in Murmansk. The nature is severe. The climate is not comfortable. There is a lack of sun and there are a lot of nasty days. During last decades it became modern city. Not all population of Murmansk likes that the number of migrants is constantly increases. Economy of Murmansk region is unstable. The ecology is bad here. The life in the North of Russia is constantly changing. The biggest part of my respondents thinks that it is changing not for good. Only shopping centers are building in Murmansk now. The North of Russia is "more European". The life in Russian North becomes harder every day. Conditions were better in the North earlier. Now people feel abandonment of the North and unnecessary of people's being here. People try

to move to other regions. Standards of living falls, factories close and so on. Now salaries are the same as in other regions of Russia and the prices are higher.

Almost all wrote about specific architecture of Murmansk. Murmansk is not like other cities of Russia. It has few historical and architectural buildings and monuments. Buildings are similar and grey. The biggest part of my respondents wants to move to other region of Russia. Only two of them want to move to the other country. One woman even said that more she travel to other places more she doesn't want to come back to Murmansk. A lot of people mentioned that it is difficult to live in the North not only because of climate and bad ecology but because of low incomes too.

Most of my respondents from Murmansk don't feel the proximity of the border. For some of them to live near Norway means to have opportunity to go shopping there. "If you live near border with Norway you can always buy good coffee" – said one of my respondents. To live near the border is to go to the other country more often and to see foreigners on the street of native town. It is great opportunity to know the culture of neighbouring country better. You can find the work abroad if you want. A lot of Russians now work in Kirkenes for example. "We know Norwegians better because we have the border with Norway and because there are economical relations with this country. But it can't change people's nature and their mentality" – said one man. Some of my respondents said that living near the border gives the opportunity to communicate with foreigners, to travel abroad, to exchange the experience with Norwegians, to understand the mentality of them.

"It is easier to apply for a visa if you live in Murmansk region. Trips to Norway are ordinary things now. But shopping is very good in Murmansk too. I like to go to Norway to change environment, to see fjords" – said one woman. But tourism is very expensive in Norway. Now Russians have the opportunity to go to Norway and Finland by own car.

Some people speak Norwegian and have work related to this country. Some Russians moved to live to Norway. People who live in Murmansk region used to see foreigners, people of other culture. Residents of Murmansk region treat the Norwegians as neighbours and not as representatives of the NATO threat. People encounter with another culture. It doesn't mean that they copy foreign culture. But they understand that there are different cultures and they are unconcerned about this. Norwegian and Russian cultures influence on each other.

The fieldwork showed the author that the concept of Barents identity which political and cultural elite of Barents region try to build here, in the North of Europe, is mostly artificial

construction right now. There is a group of people in Region involved in cooperation. We can call them professional participants of cooperation. Due to the many contacts with foreigners they really can feel themselves Barents residents. At the same time a lot of ordinary people even can't explain that is the Barents cooperation and the proximity of the border means nothing for them.

The author of this paper made several interviews with Russians living far from the Barents Region in Leningrad region. It was very interesting and useful for this work to compare answers of people living in different parts of Russia. Several people said that they are living in USSR and they don't care which constructions politicians invented. One respondent said that foreign state is another world which is like our and different in the same time. He also stressed that mixing of cultures is great thing. He mentioned Arthur Schopenhauer who said that one who has nothing to be proud, proud of his nationality. By his point of view Russians are kind people who live and work in Russia. Russians make their country better in spite of everything.

Leningrad region is not far from Finland. But most of my respondents said that the closeness of the Finnish border only makes buying Finnish products easier and that's all. Only few people mentioned that they feel influence of such processes as globalization and integration. Then I asked people about differences between Russia and Finland most of them said that each country is different from others. They said about traditions. They describe Russian as a generous, hard-working and hospitable. They also mention that the harsh climate, the lack of the sun and a lot of dark nights influence on the character. They said that foreigners are more open. In their opinion foreigners believe state more. Russians from this region says that they have no attention to any cooperation processes and can't say anything about it. Most of ordinary people have no interest to political situation. They don't think about it. They care about their own achievements and problems. Everyone lives in his own world. People have different views even on economical situation in their own country.

I asked people the question: "What is to be Russian?" Many respondents answered that they don't know that perfectly is to be Russian but it is great. Russians are different: kind and unkind, generous and greedy but most of them are open, compassionate and honest. People said that they can find Russians everywhere with the help of jokes, proverbs and sayings. A lot of Russians say that they try to think about negative things less and to watch TV rare.

We can make some conclusions now. There is no ethnocentric or disadvantaged ethnic identity in the Murmansk region. We can call the identity of residents of Murmansk region quite normal. It means that the image of it's people is seen as positive, but there is no favoritism. The

relation to Norwegians is quite tolerant. A lot of respondents said that they are proud to be Russians. It also shows that the identity of people living in Murmansk region is normal. We can say also that the identity of borderland Russians most clearly expressed with the help of contrast with the representatives of Norway.

2.2. How we see Norwegians?

There are people with practically nothing to say about Norwegians. There are also some which spoke a lot about this foreign country and it's citizens. Many of interviewees have little experience of communicating with foreigners and do not really know that they think about them. A lot of Russians try to avoid saying what they feel about their Nordic neighbours. They just say something like: "People are different. Russians are different too". There are good and bad people among representatives of every nation. Some respondents said that after you have met a few of them, you realized that they are human just like us. On the contrary, others said that difference is much greater then you thought at first.

The attitude towards foreigners as "strange" persons is typical at the initial stage. The word "foreigner" in Russian consists of two parts which can be translated as "strange" and "other". By the way the situation is the same in many other languages (English, French, German and others).

Norway is rich and beautiful country with very high standard of living. Norway has living standards, social, cultural and economical life different from Russian. It is different in everything. Norway and Russia are two different states. They have different politics. People have different mentality. But some people say that the only difference between Norway and Russia is the number of population. Most of respondents speak only pleasant things about Norway and Norwegians. One woman has never been in Norway but thinks that it is clean and calm small country. It is not like Russia. Norway is as different from Russia as Earth from Mars. Norwegians and Russians are absolutely different. "Norwegians live and Russians survive" – she said.

One woman said that she does not want to go to Norway because it is bad country in her mind. Traditional family values in Norway gave their way to dirt and debauchery. Norway is changing not for good and there will be no ethnic Norwegians there soon. She doesn't like the situation with Russian children in Norway. It makes her view of this country very negative. Russian women often say that they don't like the situation with Russian children in Norway, which were taken from their parents.

Now a lot of Russians mention that Norway became worse because of it's politic. Norway changed a lot during last decades and it will keep changing. Many Russians think that it changed not for good because Norway is Norwegians and there are less and less Norwegians in Norway. "Removal of children in foster care, pedophilia, fairy tales about gays and lesbians. Children of all countries deserve better life" – said one of respondents.

One interview is very specific and I even thought about including it my paper. But people are different and everyone have the right to have his own view of the world. It is interview with young man. He is 26. He is from Murmansk. He speaks English. He was in Norway many times. He said that Norwegian women are not nice. Alcohol is very expensive in Norway. There are a lot of Arabs and negros in Norway. Norway changed a lot. They have more Arabs now. Norway is very boring place in his mind. But there is one good thing – we can buy European goods there at a reasonable price. Norwegians used to live according to rules. We don't like any rules. He doesn't want to move to Norway of course. He is so "patriotic" that he gave Russians only pleasant characteristics. Here they are: "Russians Northerners has similar characteristics as other Russians but all of them are twice bigger". Everything changed after breaking of Iron Curtain. Strip clubs appeared. Even idiot can go to the university now. It is interesting that this guy has friends in Norway and says that they are hospitable.

A lot of Russians says that Norwegians look funny. They have strange clothes. They are greedy, more practical, calculating, stingy with emotions. They have different temper. But we have something in common – our Northern land and resistant northern character. Some people said that Norwegians has different physiology – "the typical Norwegian is the high blond Viking".

A lot of my respondents wrote that Norwegians are calm, peaceful, disciplined. Norwegians are calmer than Russians because they have no so many problems as Russians. They are more closed in communication than Russians. They have different culture. But all of us are people with our joys and sorrows. Russian and Norwegians have good sense of humor. It brings us together.

One respondent wrote that Russians and Norwegians have something common in character, attitude to the life. Many ordinary Norwegians are very similar to Russians. They are tolerant, friendly, and able to remember a good attitude. Human values are the same. But at the same time, the Norwegians are more pragmatic.

There is cooperation but ordinary people don't know about it. The cooperation can't give them anything. There are different festivals, meetings with writers, exhibitions, performances etc. Some people wrote that there is international cooperation but it does not extend. There are professional ties but there are not so much of them. Others wrote that the cooperation was developing until recent time. Almost none of respondents feel military tensions in this region. A lot of respondents said that we need to make friends with the neighbours.

And there are some people who wrote that the cooperation between Russia and Norway develops. People know about exchange of students, cinema festivals and other events. Some people even want to be the part of cooperation process. Few of them are already the part of cooperation. People taking part in cooperation process even told the author that cooperation is developing now even better than earlier despite of political situation and all difficulties.

Really Murmansk region was involved in different cooperation projects relating to the border for a long time. It goes without saying that the "glasnost" era and ruing of Iron Curtain stimulated cooperation activities in all spheres. Almost all my respondents mentioned it in their interviews. Now people have opportunity to travel around the world. Cooperation and contacts (economical, cultural, social and others) started their development after ruing of the Iron Curtain and Perestroyka. It keeps it's development now. People mention festivals, exhibitions and other projects speaking about cultural cooperation.

Even people who like Norway very much say that it is a pity that Norwegians were joined to sanctions against Russian Federation. In their mind it shows that all this cooperation not worth a fig. Almost everyone mentioned about problems with Russian children in Norway which were taken from their parents almost without any reason. One woman remembered how one Norwegian wanted to become acquainted with Russian girls, but was blind drunk.

The North unites Norwegians and Russians. It is difficult to say if cooperation is developing now. International contacts became part of our life. There are a lot of joint projects. People are interested in foreign culture in Norway and in Russia. They are not something extraordinary for us anymore. But political situation may ruin everything now. After the sanctions against Russia it seems that there are no any perspectives for cooperation between Russia and Norway now. But it is impossible to build new Iron Curtain in modern world. Cooperation can be developed only in such spheres as culture, sport and tourism. The situation in the field of economy and politics is more difficult.

People in Nikel see Norwegians more often than other people from Murmansk region. They remember humanitarian aid from Norway in the 90s. In 90-s Russian children asked Norwegians for chewing gum and money. In those times Norwegians were like inhabitants of other planet for Russians. They had nice clothes, unusual hairstyle. And Norwegians remember the liberation of Finmark by Soviet soldiers. There are a lot of interesting international projects near the border like Ski Track of friendship - mass ski run across three borders - Norwegian, Finish and Russian. But people from Nikel can tell more unpleasant stories too because they are closer to the border. For example one man told me about Norwegian plane which violated the air border of our country flying over Nikel in 80-s. Lera remembers this case too. Russian military transferred anti-aircraft units to the Nikel as a result of it.

Attitude to the memory of soldiers in Norway is very respectful. May be it is because no one Russian soldiers crossed the threshold of the house without permission from the Norwegian hosts. During the war there was a hospital in one Norwegian house, when the hosts came back, hospital moved to the tent. I was very pleased that Norwegians so reverently speak about the Russian army. A lot of my respondents wrote that now Norwegians in Kirkenes are tired of Russians. They are not as friendly as earlier.

Border regions of our countries are experiencing socio-cultural impact of the neighboring countries, however, as the adjacent hinterland area. Some residents of border regions can speak Norwegian and understand Norwegian language. A lot of Russians think that Norway is richer and more developed country than Russia. The image of Norwegian in eyes of people from Murmansk region doesn't differ from images of representatives of other European nations. However Russian attitude to Norwegians is "warmer" than to residents of other European countries, probably due to the fact that Russia has always had friendly relations with Norway.

We can make the conclusion that some vigilance in relation to neighboring countries, indicated in recent years, is a temporary phenomenon. Relations with neighbours are being built under the influence of a more long-term factors rather than short-term "political games" of the central authorities. The attitude to the representatives of other country depends not only on the presence of kinship and friendship ties but on the frequency of trips abroad too. Unfortunately the frequency of visits of Russians to the Norway has decreased significantly in recent years due to a number of negative factors. The media of Western countries forms a negative image of Russia. But the biggest part of Russian respondents thinks that Murmansk region should develop cooperation with Norway. Attitude to Norwegians is mostly positive.

This shows that efforts to form the “neighbourly” identity were very important. The return to the “oppositional” model of identity in this border region is impossible despite the negative propaganda in the media trying to divide the people of the region to “us” and “them”. Russians and Norwegians have long been allies and partners. It is as difficult to destroy the fruits of more than 20 years of close cooperation in the framework of the BEAR as it was difficult to build its foundations at the initial stage of cooperation. In the case of preserving the possibilities of direct contacts of the population living on different sides of the state border the artificial imposition of “oppositional” identity model becomes difficult.

2.3. How borderland Norwegians see Russians and themselves?

The author made several interviews with Norwegians living in Norwegian town Kirkenes. He asked them several questions. Among them there were:

- What is to be Norwegian? What is Norwegian national character?
- What is to live in Northern Norway? Are the people who live in the North different from the inhabitants of the rest of Norway?
- How can you describe a northerner?
- What does it mean to live near the border between Russia and Norway?
- What can you say about Norway? Is Norway different from Russia?
- Have you ever been in Russia?
- Can you find a few words to describe the Russian people?
- What Norwegians and Russians have in common? What is the difference between them?
- Do contacts between Russia and Norway develop now?
- Does international cooperation develop here?
- Do you have Russian friends, personal contacts or correspondence with representatives of the neighbouring country?
- Do you feel military tensions on the border between Russia and Norway now?
- Is there a cultural cooperation in the Barents Region? If yes, what is it?
- Do you remember unpleasant stories related to Russia and Russians?

Norwegians called Russians cheerful, sociable, kind, friendly, patient. Norwegians mentioned Russian hospitality (differs from the Norwegian hospitality, which is also present, but not so obvious). Russians always bringing gifts, inviting people for tea, dinner, sharing whatever they got, etc. It shows that ethnic stereotypes do not depend much on the current political situation and the influence of media in border regions. They are based on years of

communication with the residents of neighbour state. Several Norwegian respondents told that they have Russian friends and personal contacts with Russians and their Russian acquaintances are the funniest, sweetest, strangest and coolest.

Norway differs from Russia. Russia differs from Norway. One woman said that it depends on the viewing angle. She said that for her Russia comes off as a country with slightly more traditional values than Norway. Russians are very family-oriented. Russians marry young. To be Norwegian is to identify with Norwegian values (gender equality, for instance). Norwegians describe themselves as polite, a little bit reserved/introvert, but they stressed that it really depends on the person. Most of Norwegians are very proud of being Norwegian. They proud of being a part of a young nation, having Viking roots, social democracy etc.

One woman said that to be Norwegian is coming from a small country that thinks it's the center of the world. She said that Norwegians have no national character. Norwegians are health-seeking, traveling, rich, spoiled but extremely friendly, well-meaning and probably a little bit naïve. She called her countryman more individualist, more independent, more trusting and open, where Russians can be suspicious and cold in appearance. But she also mentioned that this is generalizing.

One of respondents from Kirkenes said that Northern Norway is different in the way that people are more open towards each other than in the South perhaps friendlier towards strangers. The woman said that to live near the border between Russia and Norway is then you get used to having Russians as your neighbour. She mentioned that Russia is very different from Norway. It's a totally different culture with other customs they don't have in Norway. The food, the clothing style, the way of thinking are different. First time she was in Russia (Nikel) with her school class at 13. Since then she visited Arkhangelsk, Murmansk and St. Petersburg. She couldn't say what is Norwegian national character, but describe Norwegians like people who love hiking in the nature and tex mex on the weekends. She couldn't describe a northerner, a resident of the Sør-Varanger commune, a resident of the borderland. She said that too many different people live in this area. She was too young then the Iron Curtain fell, but said that the border was opened and there was more Russians coming to Kirkenes and Norwegians going to Russia after it. She mentioned that the cooperation and contacts still develops here and she doesn't feel military tensions on the border between Russia and Norway. It's a long tradition with cultural exchange across the border that goes for visual art, music and theatres on both sides.

Norwegians who take part in cooperation process believe that there's some kind of a border mentality. They said that we are very close to each other. People in the North are very open, got a frank way of expressing themselves, a lot of humor, maybe even a bit more relaxed than people in, for instance, Oslo. A residence of Sør-Varanger commune might be slightly more open and relaxed when meeting a foreigner, because he/she are from a multicultural area. North Norwegians are different from people from the South of Norway. To live near the border between Russia and Norway for Norwegians is being in the middle of a multicultural city. Even though there are not more than 10 000 inhabitants in Kirkenes, it has the same energy as a slightly bigger city.

Norwegians noticed that cooperation between Norwegian territories and Murmansk region continues it's development (cross-border projects in arts, education, etc.) But some of them can feel military tensions on the border between Russia and Norway now. One girl mentioned that "to live near the border between Russia and Norway means to live close to huge country that is closed off and mysterious to most. Russia is a huge country, hard to generalize about something that covers so much land. Russia is mostly different from Norway by size and amount of people".

It was very useful for this work to interview Norwegians. It helped to make the picture of borderland Russians full. It is always good to see yourself from the other's eyes.

3.0. Identity and culture. Cultural identity of Borderland Russians

3.1. The influence of culture on identity

Culture helps people to navigate around the world. Moreover, it is one of the best ways of understanding yourself. Culture is always national. Different cultures were born due to the originality of different regions. Cultural values and national characters are different. Cultures are tied to a specific location in space. Ethnic cultures contain customs of ancestors. Ethnic culture is the basis of national culture. Flier A. said that there is no neutral culture (Flier 1995:37). Culture helps to identify yourself with some group and build individual identity. Culture may help to distinguish “our” from “other’s”.

As it was mentioned above, identity can be described as sustainability of individual, social, cultural, national and civilizational options which help to answer questions: “Who I am?” and “Who we are?” The problem of identity in the times of globalization includes first of all personal identity (forming person’s stable representations of himself as a member of society) and cultural identity which helps person to determine its place in the transnational space.

The assimilation of values and norms of “own” socio-cultural community is necessary for forming identity. It is possible only if it is based on the opposition to “foreign” value system. A person must have a clear view of reality. It helps him to find his place in this reality. It may be difficult in times of globalization.

It is very important to save traditions in modern world but intercultural dialogue is also very important. We should be open to the acquaintance with cultural traditions of other countries and try to make our own cultural heritage familiar for other cultures.

The essence of cultural identity is the conscious acceptance of the person of the cultural norms and patterns of behavior, values and language, understanding of the “I” from the standpoint of the cultural characteristics that are accepted in a given society, self-identification itself with the cultural patterns of this particular society. Culture forms people’s feeling of belonging to a particular community (a sense of identity).

During the work on this paper the author was lucky enough to visit the international meeting “Nikel and Kirkenes in Norwegian and Russian eyes” (February 7, 2014). It helps to look at the situation in Russian-Norwegian borderland closer. I think that if you come in Russia only to buy the petrol you will never know anything about this country. And if you come to

Norway only to buy diapers – too. Do people really need the cooperation if a lot of them are not interested in culture of other country and mentality of their neighbours?

People-to-people contacts can really do a lot of important things. It was mentioned about Consul General of the Russian Federation in Kirkenes M. Noskov. These contacts are the base of the cooperation. Meeting each other we have the chance to know each other better and break stereotypes. But I think that 20 years passed and we must start real cooperation. May be young generation will help in it, but after hearing critical speeches and stereotyped views from representatives of young people I am not sure is it possible to achieve the new level of cooperation in the nearest future.

3.2. Is the transborder identity possible? The dialogue of cultures

The state is not the main player on the field of identity anymore. U. Beck wrote that the cosmopolitan state may become the best answer on the questions of globalization. This kind of state may be built with the help of principle of tolerance. It is necessary to form a certain way of thinking, supranational identity and culture to build this kind of state. In this case to be cosmopolitan means to accept equality and difference at the same time and to be committed to the good of all mankind (Beck 2010).

Cultures are open, dynamic systems which are connected with each other by global net. Cultures are dynamic, changing, complex and multifaceted phenomena. People should switch their perception and behavior between two or more cultures, to feel themselves representatives of one or another culture in different circumstances. It means to have bicultural or multicultural identity. It is possible only for people who underwent a process of socialization and enculturation on the verge of two or more cultures. Cultural identity is the group identity. It means that all qualities with the help of which person identify himself belong to the particular cultural group.

Which values can unite people living in prosperous Norway with those who live in small Russian town Nikel near Russian-Norwegian border? Can we build common identity in this zone? Is it real to build the bridge over traditional cultural differences with the help of cross-border cooperation? Cultures meet each other on the border. Does the new culture exist? Does the special zone between two cultures exist? People compare their motherland with other country. Is the border the place there person's identity can be lost? Author try to answer these questions in this paper.

We should try to create a new type of international dialogue and the border should be used for dialogue and development. Many regions are covered by contradictions. The modern world is

unstable and conflict-prone. Everything is relatively well in Barents Region. How did we achieve this?

It goes without saying that identity of people living in the region is changing but it is not common identity (like Barents identity mentioned above). We can speak a lot about Barents identity but it is still only utopian construction. A lot of Russians have experience of crossing Norwegian border. The author of this paper is one of them. Each time the man cross border he should be ready to the perception of a completely new. It doesn't mean that he rejects his own values and representations. He just tries to understand the world of "Other" and his identity is changing in this moment. People from EU have no any problems with crossing the border. The situation is different for Russians. I don't know if Russians ever will be a part of the European world. It needs time nevertheless. Do not take the neighbours as the "Others" is a great advantage. We should have the desire to understand, trust and to become friends before building the dialogue across border.

The way the Norwegians represent the Russians is different from the way Russians portray themselves, and vice versa. We can understand who we are during the process of understanding "Other". It will help to break stereotypes.

Russian philosopher Ilyin wrote that identity is a product of free choice. Identity of people living in borderland is difficult and ambiguous. Finnish geographer Anssi Paasi wrote several works on the border between Russia (USSR) and Finland. He thought that the influence of the border on the life of borderland residents is very important. It plays great role in public consciousness, human self-identification with the territories of different ranks (country, region and so on) (Paasi 1996). "New theory of political borders was based on Paasi's papers which is in it's turn the important part of the theory of world systems" (Kolossov 1998).

The role of BEAR is very important for regional identity. Cross-border area now covers not only the area along the state border, but many areas in the far depths of the country - around sea ports and others (something like borderland of second level). We should stress also that identity is controversial and multiple by it's nature and is built as a result of dialogue and power relations between social groups, between social groups and the state and between states. Two forms of group identity (cultural and political) compete. They depend on the ethnic communities and public entities. Elites can use historical myths, social representations and other things that distinguish "us" from "them" to mobilize ethnic groups to fight their opponents. The role of ethnic identity is still play one of the main roles in territorial self-identification of the man. But

its role gradually falls. Many people identify themselves with many territorial and/or ethnic communities. Borders influence on the evolution of identity. Identity influence on functions of borders and activities in the border areas in it's turn. Cultural border performs the functions of contact between cultures, while the de jure borders – internal functions to ensure the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state, social and ethno-cultural integration of its population. Border posts, customs and so on symbolize independence and show us that state borders are the lines of partition.

Usually the identity is changing very slowly, but in critical circumstances, changes in it can occur in a matter of months. Globalization leads to increase of numbers of people with double or even multiple identities. By the way, multiple identity is ordinary thing in Russia. It is so spread because of a large number of mixed marriages for example.

To be yourself is one of the principles of logic of dialogue of cultures. We compare ourselves with others. We can understand our “Self” only with the help of “not-me” and this “not-me” will be the part of our “Self” nevertheless because we will distinguish from “not-me” only features which are close to our “Self”. Any social and even personal identity is actualized in a collision and conflict with someone else's identity.

The image of “Other” can be the instrument of affirmation or self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-criticism and even self-improvement. The human nature contains the fear of “Others”. But we rise above this fear with the help of social and cultural mechanisms that allow us to broaden and deepen the concept of identity of a small group, family, collective, ethnic group, nation, to the whole human race. There are common values for all humankind. There are national features also. It complements the universal, but never contradicts it. The processes of globalization lead to the construction of a universal global culture where the common principles will be combined with national characteristics.

The crisis of identity exists then the contexts of man's life changes. There is no constant identity. Identity changes not only in moments then man adapts to the new conditions but during all his life. It depends on the age also.

Bakhtin also believe that “the Other” is involved in the formation of identity. At all times, the identification process is based on your/someone else's opposition. “The Other” is a foreigner also, frightening his strange speech, clothing, manners (Bakhtin 1979: 352). The concept of dialogue of cultures is very important for Bakhtin. The dialogue of cultures means communication through the scope of universal significance and is expressed in the equal

importance of the subjects of communication. The meaning occurs in a zone “between” actors and it’s aim is the establishing of understanding.

The idea of a “dialogue of cultures” was a response to the idea of a “clash of civilizations” which Toynbee expressed first, and then – Huntington. This idea has considerable potential of the establishment of peace and cooperation, replacing mutual confrontation. The subjects of such dialogue are cultures. Realization of the idea of Bakhtin expressed in dialogical co-existence may become the key to the cultural development without conflicts. According to Bakhtin all modern cultures should be included in this dialogue. The dialogue actors should recognize the right to cultural diversity.

The rejection of the logic of confrontation and approval of the logic of compromise and cooperation are very important. The dialogue of cultures should be based on tolerance. It will prevent different social disasters – both local and global. The purpose of the dialogue is the communication which leads to understanding. The understanding in this context is not the process of finding of the meaning. It is the process of formation of the meaning. The ability of the subject to the establishment of understanding as a result of the dialogue is the most demanded in today’s culture. The dialogue is the only acceptable basis for modern civilization and cultural balance. It can help to save cultures in their various forms.

Is it possible to build the ideal model of dialogue of cultures in reality? The dialogue of cultures is possible if there is equality of cultures. If inequality is present the dialogue will inevitably become not only a monologue but, most likely, the systematic application of certain policies designed for the interests of the dominant subject of communication. NATO’s actions against countries where, in it’s view, the principles of democracy are violated isn’t the example of a dialogical situation.

The will of the exchange of information, the openness to meanings of other cultures, the desire to know it’s values are very important. The subjects of dialogue can not master the cultural codes of each other, but they know their content. They can not share the values of each other, but they know and understand the basic components of these values. Such situation creates the conditions for dialogue, where both cultures demonstrate the desire to understand each other. Today’s practice shows that the values of all cultures, regardless of their spatial characteristics, is naturally perceived by the world community.

The concept of “dialogue of cultures” is disappearing and become something like diplomatic notion “let’s live in peace, guys”. Bibler wrote about it many years ago. Rosenzweig,

Rosenstock-Huessy, Buber, Bakhtin wrote about dialogue. But the idea to write about the culture in the context of the dialogue of cultures was Bibler's. I can say that Rosenstock-Huessy and Bibler has different views on the dialogue. But both of them tried to identify the person through the dialogue. First philosopher wrote about the idea of society and other – about idea of individuality like a cell of dialogical communication.

Bibler understands the idea of dialogue as adequate form of being in the culture, as the form of communication and the form of understanding of other culture. He wrote that XX century is the time of reorientation of the mind from the idea of understanding the world as an object of cognition to the idea of mutual understanding (Bibler 1991: 7-8). The mutual understanding is very important for the philosophy of dialogue. The finding of the meaning is it's central part. Bibler said that monologue is preparing for creative dialogue (Bibler 1991: 295).

The most interesting thing in the studying question of identity is the self-identity of the population of border regions. It is very interesting how self-identity changes in the process of development of international relationships. This question is very important in the present-day situation because integration processes are developing very fast.

Regional identity has it's own specific. It depends on the region and characteristics which distinguish it from other regions. It also depends on the culture. Regional identity is connected with self-identification of people living in certain area. Regional identity of people is constantly changing due to the influence of globalization and regionalization. This is true for the border regions of Russia and Norway. Border regions are special districts. They are situated on the outskirts of the country and perform barrier, filter and contact functions. However, the border region can be understood as a set of two regions located on opposite sides of the border, which have historical, cultural, ethnic, environmental and economic community, but separated by two or more sovereign states. The location of the region influences on mentality of it's residents and their way of life also. The population has different kinds of contacts such as friendly relations, cultural, social and economic cooperation.

Usually there are historical prerequisites for cooperation in different spheres in border regions. To say true there are not so many historical prerequisites for cooperation between Russia and Norway. Pomor era took place a long time ago. There were almost no contacts for a long time of Soviet period except exchange of official delegations. There was no mutual set of similarities between the populations in this region. But there are other factors which help to build cooperation here. A lot of Russians live in Northern Norway now for example. Different people,

religions and cultures coexisted in the Barents Region for a long time. Relations between them were tolerant and peaceful. The climate, geographical features and landscape are similar in Russia and Norway.

Today political situation isn't easy. The role of border region in process of international cooperation increases in these circumstances. People who take part in cooperation between Pechenga district and Finnmark told the author of this paper that cooperation is developing even now. A lot of new projects existed in these difficult times here, at the edge of the world, far away from the capital cities. There are a lot of different factors separating people from two sides of the political border like religion, language and others. But nevertheless there are different kinds of cooperation here (economic, ecological, social, cultural and even religious).

During time relations between Russia and Norway became more open, equal and desecuritized. If we will look on each other like on equal partner everything will be good in the future. The emphasis on a relationship of dialogue is important. It is important not to look on each other in "we-them" way. It is very important to build dialogue here because it helps not to maximize own interests but to step own position and empathize with the experience and suffering of the "Other". Dialogue doesn't help to gain maximum benefit for the "Self" but it will help to learn from the neighbour. Our relationships here must be based on "dialogue" and "partnership". It will also enhance regional security. The studying of cultural and regional identity may be very useful for processes of cooperation in border regions and for international cooperation too.

Different individuals prefer different types of identity. The national identity can be very important for one person and ethnic identity can be more important for other for example. My interviews are the best example of it. The identity depends on situation. It is multiple. Respondents gave different answers on the question: "What is to be Russian"? It is to be born in Russia, to have Russian parents, to be patriot of own country, to love Russia, to speak Russian, to know customs and traditions and so on. Russian scientist V. Dahl wrote that the name, the religion, the blood of the ancestors do not make a person a member of a particular nationality. Spirit, soul of man shows to which nation the man belongs. To be Russian is not ethnic but cultural characteristic. The man can born from Russian parents but not be Russian by culture and vice versa. Russian philosopher Fedotov wrote that the nation is first of all cultural category. We can define it as coincidence of culture and state (Fedotov 1992: 245).

Regional identity can be more important for a person than ethnic identity. A lot of people living in Murmansk region call themselves first of all northerners. There are a lot of kinds of regional identity like citizen of the world, cosmopolitan, Earthman, European, Russian and so on. It is very important to know the history and culture of neighbour country to build the dialogue of cultures. Cultural identity of Russians contains cultural traditions of different nations.

Several respondents called themselves Barents citizens. They are representatives of so called Barents elite. But there are not so many such people. So we can make the conclusion that it is too early to say about something like Barents identity in global scale now. But identity of small groups also can influence on cooperation process and people living in this area.

“Barents region” is just a political invention, which is based on the “speech act” (Kirkenes Declaration). One of the aims was the building of substantially new, transboundary community on the base of the common identity. This is very difficult because Russia has different political system, different language, etc.

“In modern world it is neither possible to isolate one’s identity from interacting with others nor feasible to erect boundaries and build walls to protect one’s own sense of belonging. Living in harmony with others, being open to others and feeling comfortable with other cultures are attitudes many would find easy to accept” (Feyzi 2013: 232).

Perspectives of cooperation between border regions depend on the progress of regional associations like BEAR. Border regions can become the basis of solidarity of all nations on the basis of understanding and mutual enrichment in culture and other spheres. Peace is a highly valued ideal in many cultures and epochs. Culture crosses borders. Many Russians do their shopping in Kirkenes. Norwegians dine in Nikel’s and Murmansk’s restaurants, do shopping in Russia and so on. There are a lot of cross-border activities. There are projects in culture among them.

Cultural cooperation is not necessary from first sight. It often cannot even appeal to categories like usefulness. It is based on a voluntary basis. But cultural cooperation is very important for international relations. It helps to build symmetric relationship between Russia and Norway. It helps to save the diversity rather than develops a common identity.

Media in Russian and Norwegian border regions seldom express the common identity. Norwegian journalists often describe Russians like “the Other” from the East. Such situation

takes place in Russia too. The common identity in it's turn can be built only on the basis of feeling of likeness with other individuals belonging to the Barents Region. The interviews made by author also show that we are not so similar with each other. We carry different but equal identities. The building of common regional identity is hardly realistic right now.

It is very easy to generalize then you deal with foreigners. They all look the same especially if you do not often communicate with them in real life. This makes it possible to manipulate the images of "Others". This is happening now through the media for example. Media play a great role in forming "good-neighbour" or "oppositional" model of the identity in borderland areas. In the case of saving opportunities of direct contacts between representatives of the ethnic groups living on different sides of the state border, the artificial creation of "oppositional" identity is difficult. The local population of the Russian-Norwegian borderland has very close contacts. Population has friends, acquaintances, relatives in other country. That is why the formation of the "oppositional" identity in the border areas of Russia and Norway is hardly possible.

Demographic and social processes lead to a complication of the ethnic composition and the identity of the inhabitants of the borderland. The number of mixed marriages is increasing for example. There is a growing mutual trust and the age-old stereotypes continue to fade despite the political situation in the world. The area between Norway and Russia is the interaction space.

Culture policy and artistic activity is a kind of identity-forming project here. A cultural co-operation between parties of different cultural backgrounds is built on the mutual acceptance of equality. The cultural diversity in Russian-Norwegian borderland can be described as a mosaic. We should encourage this diversity rather than creating a common regional identity.

Nobody called himself the citizen of the world, the resident of Earth and something like this. Many people called themselves the residents of the Murmansk region. It means that many respondents choose local and regional identity from all kinds of territorial identity. Sometimes these kinds of identity are even stronger than national identity. Modern man may feel a citizen of a particular country and region and citizen of the world at the same time.

The borders become more open due to the influence of internationalization and globalization. National borders have lost a part of their barrier function. The EU countries try to accelerate the formation of a common identity, although it is still weak. Integration processes in Europe and in other parts of the world may lead to a strengthening of

macro-regional identity and, consequently, a weakening of the barrier function of internal borders and strengthening of external.

Local territorial communities influence on forming of the identity of people living in area. Transborder identity is forming in borderland areas where there are some similarities in language, culture, etc. American geographer O. Martinez developed the concept of “internationalist” culture that has formed among the population of border areas which try to benefit from cross-border contacts. This culture is characterized by increased mobility and receptivity to innovation.

A lot of people have multiple identities. They associate themselves with two or more ethnic and cultural groups. Cultural, linguistic, religious, social and professional identities which are not always clearly linked to a specific territory are enhanced.

Steven Vertovec wrote that “an increasing number of people are able to live dual lives. Participants are often bilingual, move easily between different cultures, frequently maintain homes in two countries, and pursue economic, political and cultural interests that require their presence in both” (Vertovec 2001: 579). Migrants have transnational, multiple identities for example. Sometimes they can feel something like cosmopolitan sense of participation and belonging.

However, most authors do not agree with the fact that the borders are gradually dying out. Borders remain a significant barrier even in those regions of the world where integration processes are the most far-gone.

Interviewing shows that there are not so many people which can say that they are people-in-between. The regional identity is the part of social identity. We can distinguish two components of social identification – cognitive and affective. Cognitive component contains knowledge, ideas about characteristics of own group and self-awareness of its member. Affective component contains evaluation of qualities of own group, the importance of membership in it. Regional social identification has two components – knowledge and presentation about the features of their own territorial group and self-awareness of its member and assessing the quality of its own territory, its importance in the global and local coordinate system. This helps regional communities arise. The naturalness of the region is determined by similar geographical and cultural settings.

Nevertheless people living in Russian-Norwegian borderland can be called “people in-between”. The interviews with people from Leningrad region shows that Russians from Murmansk region differs from other Russians. They are more tolerant to foreigners for example. The attitude to foreigners is more negative in other parts of Russia than in Murmansk region.

Giddens and Bauman describe a shift over the last century from place-based identities to mobile identities (Hazel 2009: 62). Recent theories in sociology that see identity as mobile, dynamic, hybrid, and relational; and recent theories in geography that consider the relationship between place and identity (Hazel 2009: 62) .

Mechanisms of human notions about himself and about his place in the world, the formation of certain behavioral patterns and political stereotypes are very mobile in the information society. Bauman claims that “in the post-modern period, individuals find themselves with no stable position to aim for in the process of identity construction” (Bauman 2001). “People must continuously redefine their aims because if they aim for a particular goal, the likelihood is that not only will the goal have moved by the time they get there but the path they needed to follow to get there will have moved as well” (Bauman 2001).

“Identities are understood to be fluid in post-modern society. This shift in the nature of identity can also be understood as a shift from relatively stable identities rooted in place to hybrid identities characterised by mobility and flux” (Hazel 2009: 66). A great number of scientists understands identities as mobile, relational, hybrid, and discursively constructed.

The situation changes over time, so do identities. People move and they usually experience new interpersonal relations that will impact their understandings of their identities. Nowadays people can choose cultural identity. Man is at the crossroads of different cultures and can benefit from any of them. Moreover mass culture which became a part of every culture has cosmopolitan character.

After finishing of era of Modernity the state’s ability to maintain the identity of the political and cultural borders weakens. Cultural sovereignty of states is reduced thanks to information technology and transnational corporations. During globalization process global cultural sphere is forming.

Some theorists use the word “hybrid” talking about “in-betweenness” of identity of some people and group of people. For some people, mobility itself has become normalized. Some people may feel “at home in movement”.

“Said argues that people define their own identities in part through the identification of “the Other.” In this sense, people’s identities are in part constituted by their definitions of what they are not and by the creation of (physical and mental) borders or boundaries around their identities”. (Hazel 2009: 69)

“Sarup recognizes that identities are defined and limited by borders and boundaries and that “in crossing boundaries, taken-for-granted identities are thrust into consciousness”. However, some scientists have argued that most people need to have boundaries in place, but they also need to be able to cross those boundaries to maintain their identities (Hazel 2009: 75).

It is difficult to see something common in other ethnic groups not going out of own ethnic group. The nations are not friends. Friends are people from different nations, but those people who are able to go beyond the boundaries of their separate ethnic existence.

Beck wrote that a local type of cultural community different from national type is forming during the process of globalization. People may make new identities with the help of different cultural sources. Something like hybrid cultural identity we can see in Kirkenes and Nikel. Norwegian cultural specific is present in Nikel’s houses. Norwegians living in Kirkenes are changing through the communication with Russians too.

It brings people together on the basis of common cultural preferences not of their national origin. People may freely choose their cultural identity. The term glocalization often uses to indicate this type of cultural community. The word “glocalization” is made by “globalization” and “localization”. It was invented by Roland Robertson who wanted to fix two processes taking place in the global world – homogenization and heterogenization. He thought that this two processes complementary and interpenetrate each other, although, of course, they can come, and really come in specific situations, in collision with each other (Robertson 1995: 33).

American philosopher Richard Rorty said that in the future, cultural diversity will become useless. He argued that the “hybridization” of cultures do not require much time. The common world culture will be built. But it is hard to imagine that all people on Earth will identify themselves with a single culture. There are people who want to save their “other culture’s face”. It will be great advantage if the identity in Norwegian-Russian borderland will not be oppositional. But there are cases in human history then the idea invented by elites was spread at the grassroots level quickly.

Conclusion

The region builders of the 1990s took on board the postmodern understanding of the constructed nature of social reality (Browning 2003). Paasi criticized the tendency to accept regions as pre-given and natural phenomena: rather, such “naturalness” is always discursively constructed. Regions like BEAR are something like imagined communities. They are political projects first off all. To quote Neumann: “the existence of regions is preceded by the existence of regionbuilders, political actors who, as part of some political project, imagine a spatial and chronological identity for a region, and disseminate this imagined identity to others” (Neumann 1999). “In this respect, the new region building is seen to offer the possibility of envisaging a restructured Europe in which peripherality becomes a resource for action rather than a burden that confines one to the margins” (Browning 2003: 51).

“Re-ordering of political space in non-territorial terms and, moreover, to facilitate the re-conceptualisation of national identities in terms of commonness rather than enmity” (Browning 2003: 51). Communication of people here made changes of their identity possible.

Post-Cold War region building in the European north is frequently depicted highly positively as representative of a new, original, postmodern and humanistic approach to regional cooperation (Browning 2003:51).

“Here, in the North has been constructed as a sort of ‘future territory’, an ‘imagined community’ (Benedict Anderson), an experiment in post-modern territoriality whereby a region is being politically produced, communicated as politically relevant” (Browning 2003: 71).

In the beginning of working on this paper all theories of common identity in Barents Region seemed to the author curious. He thought that they are too far from reality. Really there are people living in foreign country saving their identity. It is difficult to imagine that identity of borderland citizens can change a lot because of proximity to the border and mutual contacts. During work on this project the author realized that people don’t feel almost any influence of the border in Murmansk. The situation is a little bit different in Nikel. The population of this town knows Norway and Norwegians better. People feel that the border is near. They understand that cultures integrate in borderzone. But I don’t think that identity of residents of Nikel was changed a lot. Even if it is changing, it is not practically visible on this stage.

Norwegian scientist Holger Hole said that story telling is very important. During the work on interviews the author realized that it is extremely important to listen to other people’s stories.

It is the chance to find the truth under the words. In our minds we always integrate other people's stories in our own life story. We interpret them with the help of our own experience.

What is preventing the constructing the trans-border identity of border residents? What can help to do it? Is it necessary? There is the main purpose of all this Barents cooperation — to understand each other and to become friends. It sounds may be a little bit naive but so it is. We must break something in ourselves to understand the “Other”. We must try to look on neighbours like friends not like strangers. It will be the great advantage. And for the fruitful dialogue we need trust. And before the dialogue we must have the desire to understand. It goes without saying that we should try to create a new type of international dialogue. The border should be used for dialogue and development.

Conclusions are based on the material which came mostly from Russian part. To form more objective view of the borderland identity the author made several interviews of Norwegians. I think that interviewing Norwegians living in borderzone helped to make picture of people's identity in Norwegian-Russian borderland more clear.

As it was mentioned earlier we cooperate with each other for a long time. It will be interesting to investigate how developing of contacts (including cultural) influenced on changing identity in this territory. Different cultures meet each other on the border every day. Cultures are open systems and they help to form identity. In modern cultural anthropology culture – is a dynamic phenomenon, constantly changing, complex and multifaceted. Integration of cultural differences occurs. People should try to adequately respond to the behavior of a partner from a different culture, as if switch their perception and behavior between two or more cultures, to feel themselves representatives of one or the other culture, depending on the circumstances. Usually, this means a bicultural or multicultural identity of personality and can be achieved primarily by people who have undergone a process of socialization and enculturation on the edge of two or more cultures. But there is a danger to become a cultural Chameleon in this case.

The question – if common culture can be build in the borderland or there will be special zone between two cultures in Russian-Norwegian borderland. The problem of meeting cultures is very difficult. It is very interesting to find the answer on question if the national and personal identities are loosing near the border. Is it good to be open for changes? It is especially interesting to look on this problem on Norwegian-Russian border because a lot of regions today are covered with contradictions and the situation is quite stable here.

In broad sense the cooperation between Russia and Europe is the polyphonic dialogue. Before building the dialogue we must have desire to understand. In Europe you not always understand that you cross border. Borders between Scandinavian countries can be example of it. It is very important to know more about the art of neighbours and their language. It helps to understand foreigners better.

It was not easy to make interview in two languages. It is not easy method to interview people in order to write historical and philosophical work but in my mind it is the only method to write true story. You not always can rely on answers but interviewing is the best way of collecting material for the paper about modern history, sociology and phylosophy.

One of the respondents is the best example of so called Barents elite. She really feels herself border resident. But I think that she is living in artificial environment because all concepts of common (Barents) identity are utopian in present situation. I think that identity in Norwegian-Russian borderland (in Nikel and other places situated near the border) is slowly changing. But political situation is not conducive to the development of a sense of community. The development of the cooperation may affect the transformation of identity in the border area. But it will take more than several decades.

Some scientists wrote about the risk of loss of national identity. As Russian scientist and my tutor Inna Ryzkova said the globalization and internationalization are not synonyms. Globalization presumes that there are no borders. Internationalization in it's turn is based on borders. So we must try to reap the benefits of internationalization and to minimize the negative aspects.

Politicians and journalists say that cultural exchange initiatives with Norway are prosperous and flourishing today and say about successful exchanges and integration in Barents Region and even about common Barents identity in this area. But the biggest part of ordinary people even doesn't know that is it. I must say that now the process of cooperation repeated traveling from the same people to and from Norway. Cooperation involves a limited group of people as Arvid Viken said "exchange elite". In his article Viken says that "a more open border would probably stimulate a new era, where the features of an integrated borderland could become stronger" (Viken 2008: 39). "The construction of the Barents identity is supported rhetorically by the central authorities but the border is still one of the most controlled and surveyed on earth" (Viken 2008: 40). "The Barents identity highlights a collection of values and ideologies relating to an international or universal level of cosmopolitan activity. It also refers to

related values of inclusion, integration and multiculturalism” (Viken 2008: 40). But ordinary people in Kirkenes say that they are patriots first of all, not Barents citizens. In Murmansk and Nikel the situation is the same.

“The youngsters appreciated “‘multicultural’” Kirkenes, but at the same time they stated that the Barents rhetoric sometimes feels out of touch with real life: “I feel that there is so much talk about Barents, Barents, Barents ...but do we really have that much to do with Barents?”” (Viken 2008: 37).

Now the common identity of borderland citizens is an illusion. I don’t know is it possible to build common identity and if we need it. It is impossible to build new Iron Curtain in the modern world but political situation will influence on the process of cooperation and this influence will not be the best.

Borderland regions will become engines of economic growth, innovation centers, if the central government does not ignore the specific interests of border regions, and do not interfere with their intended cooperation.

Globalization acquires a total character. Some philosophers even talk about cosmopolitan identity. This identity is forming from different cultural sources and can be called hybrid. Cultural hybridization will be multiplied in the conditions of globalization. But it is hard to imagine that in the end all people on Earth will identify themselves with a global culture.

The main work of Danilevsky is «Russia and Europe». It was published in 1869. He wrote that each culture has its own history of development. Each culture is independent. By Danilevsky human progress is not the construction of a single civilization. Danilevsky wrote that cultures are not isolated from each other. There is mutual influence also. There are different kinds of interaction between cultures like colonization, inoculation, perception. The progress of humanity will be achieved if each of the nations (the subjects of history) will build its civilization irreducible to others. He considered mindless and mechanical assimilation of the achievements of Western culture the Russian disease.

I believe that regional cooperation between Russia and Norway will likely continue in the present situation. It is very important to understand “Other’s” mentality and language to be able to save peace in the region. So we should continue to make steps towards each other.

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